

BATTLETECH



STARS AFLAME



AN EMPIRES AFLAME SUPPLEMENT

STARS AFLAME

WAR FLEETS OF THE EMPIRES AFLAME

Based on
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Field Manual - Terran Supremacy
by DarthRads

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It all began with the Star League Civil War. It all ended with the Star League Civil War. The worlds we lived in irrevocably changed with that climactic conflict. To some the Star League was a golden age of mankind, a time of unity and progress. To others it was an era of universal oppression and deceit. Some shed tears of grief when General Kerensky died. Some shed tears of relief.

The fall of the Star League he served ended the façade of peace it had created and soon everyone would cry.

Starling



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THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE SPHERE

The person who fired the sniper bullet that killed General Aleksandr Kerensky in 2784 has never been found. They are almost certainly dead now, whether killed in battle or dying in bed of old age. But that bullet signaled the end of the Star League. Kerensky's second in command, General Aaron DeChavilier, took command of the Star League Defense Forces and made a plan. He would not surrender to the long night, or allow the Great Houses to rule worlds they had no right to. He would stand.

General DeChavilier commanded the largest fleet in existence. Even after the destruction of the Civil War, the four hundred and four active Star League WarShips could match the fleets of

every nation combined. The Star League Army could similarly break them all. It was a testament to the wealth of the Terran Hegemony and the Star League that the devastated remnants of the Star League Defense Force was still the preeminent power in the galaxy.

But General DeChavilier knew even the vaunted navy could not be everywhere at once, and the Great Houses would not be obliging enough to line all of their fleets up in one place for the Star League to render them useless. The Houses could destroy the Terran Hegemony if they chose to expend the effort. DeChavilier needed time to rebuild worlds devastated by the Civil War, and he needed someone else to hold the House's attention.

THE PIRANHA PRINCIPLE

The Star League Territorial States had been oppressed for hundreds of years, their industrial bases ravaged by a Star League that did not want to see them self sufficient. The self-proclaimed new First Lord DeChavilier knew they would collapse as soon as the next war began. They were already on the edge, spare parts drying up just during the Civil War. They would collapse if the trend continued. But if he could turn them into allies, or at least enemies of his enemies, they could help tip the balance of power in his favor. The Great Houses could never focus on his new Terran Supremacy if they had to worry about powerful Peripheral States ready to attack them while their backs

were turned. And since the Houses occupied territory that had belonged to those Periphery States before the Star League was born, the idea that they might fight to reclaim them was logical.

DeChavilier ordered the former Star League Engineers to build new factories in the Periphery States so they could be self-sufficient. And he sent twenty-five smaller and older surviving WarShips to each nation, commanded by powerful Aegis-class heavy cruisers, to further bolster their meager fleets. The influx of naval might allowed the Periphery States to match the Great Houses, while the Terran Supremacy still maintained a decisive numerical and qualitative advantage.

THE EVOLUTION OF NAVAL WARFARE

The Periphery States accepted the gifts of the new Terran Supremacy, but they knew all was not well. They could see the storm clouds of war on the horizon. Yes, the Terran Supremacy had given them great gifts, but even mighty WarShip fleets could not protect them against everything. The Taurian Concordat alone had flown a fleet equal to every ship now in the Periphery during what they called the War of Terran Aggression and they'd lost. Now the Terran and House fleets were more powerful. The Periphery needed to tip the scales in their favor.

WarShips had been the sole military might of most nations for centuries. Yes there were military DropShips, and some of them were very capable. But no one sent DropShips to fight WarShips if they had a choice. The Taurians had done so against the Star League because they had nothing else, and they'd lost everything in doing it. This time the Taurians chose to plan for losing their WarShips again. The other Periphery States joined them, and together they designed new weapons of war that would make them far more resilient to the next round of invaders.

The Periphery States started by upgrading the common *Leopard* and *Union* DropShips with weapons capable of threatening WarShips. They sent these Pocket WarShips in support of their new fleets, and when the First Succession War washed over everybody, the Periphery proved that they would bow down before no House. The *Super Leopards* and *Super Unions* held the line against the Houses, and even other

Peripheral Realms when they fought each other.

The Houses took notice of the new Pocket WarShips and began to introduce their own. The Second Succession War saw upgraded *Overlords*, *Excaliburs*, and numerous other DropShips designed to kill true WarShips. They could not be everywhere of course, but they began to revolutionize naval warfare throughout the Human Sphere. By the end of the Second Succession War, the Great Houses had come to the conclusion that Pocket WarShips were the future. They were far cheaper and quicker to build than true WarShips, could be in more places at once, and could afford to be lost. That made them superior war machines in many ways.

The Third Succession War saw the introduction of new Pocket WarShip designs dedicated from the hullnuts up for their new mission in life. Marik *Hamilcars*, Steiner *Isegrims*, Kuritan *Taihous*, Davion *Arondights*, and Liao *Lung Wangs* began to duel throughout the Human Sphere and pushed back against both the Periphery and each other. Even the Terran Supremacy felt the bite of these tiny foes and they began to retrofit their existing *Pentagons* with naval weapons to match them. This worked for a time, but Terran engineers knew they had to make new designs just like the Houses had. By the time the Third Succession War was coming to a sputtering halt the Terran Supremacy was well on its way to building dedicated Pocket WarShips.

A NEW PARADIGM

The formation of the Confederated Suns shocked the Human Sphere. No one expected two such ancient enemies to join together, but even more worrisome to their neighbors was the fact that the new nation could truly threaten anyone. Even the Terran Supremacy recognized the Confederated Suns as something closer to an equal than they were comfortable with. Terra was not accustomed to seeing any single nation of outer worlds barbarians in that light. They breathed a sigh of relief when Hanse Davion promised Candace Liao the Free Worlds League on a platter in front of every Human Sphere head of state, but the Supremacy did not sit back and watch as this threat grew to unmanageable proportions.

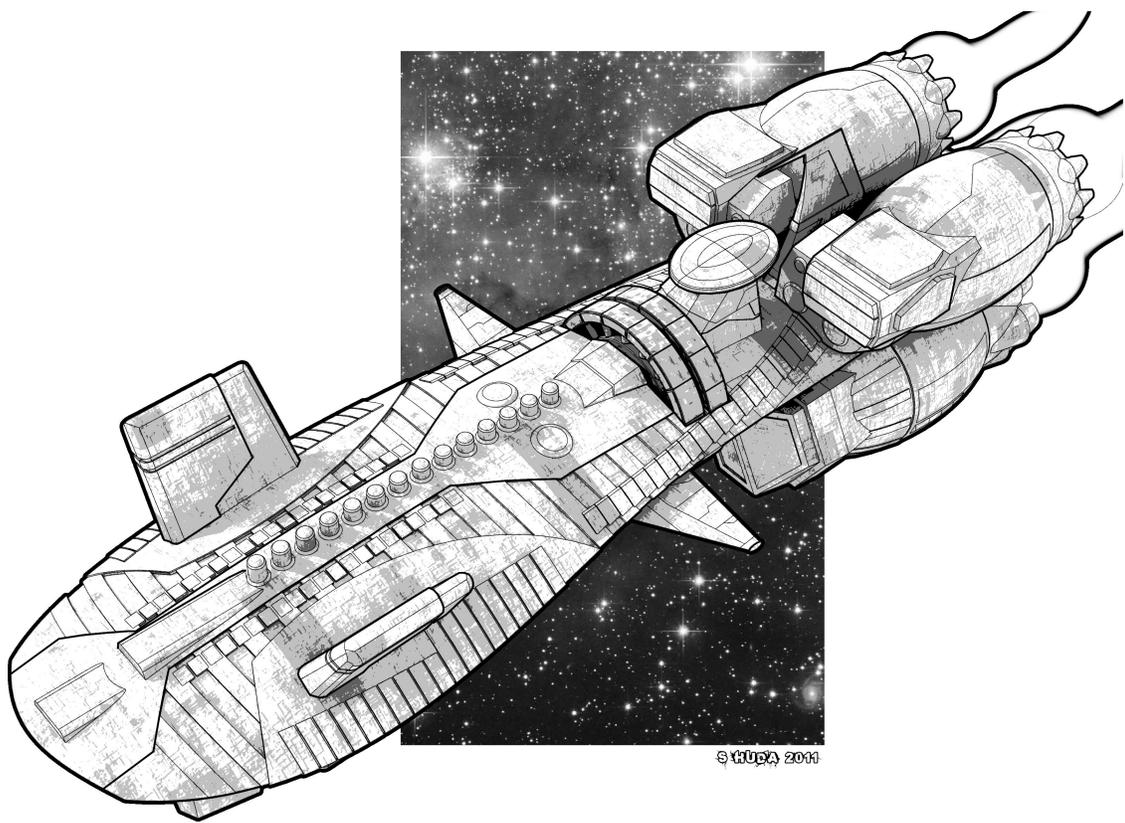
The resulting Fourth Succession War involved every nation in the Human Sphere, and the Terrans unveiled the first of their new Pocket WarShips. The Terran Supremacy flooded their enemies with the small but powerful *Dragaus*. They proved their worth by the end of the Fourth Succession War, and the Human Sphere sat back to recover. The Confederated Suns was not as powerful as many feared, witnessed by the steady loss of systems on all borders except the Free Worlds League. The other nations were not as vulnerable as they feared either, except for the ravaged League.

New WarShip designs appeared in every House as they assimilated the lessons of the last war. The Confederated Suns began launching *Avalon* and *Feng Huang* cruisers to blunt the threat of enemy war fleets on all corners of their realm. Smaller Free Worlds League *Zechetinus* and *Eagles* began to rebuild their shattered fleet, and massive *Thera* super carriers foretold a

new style of warfare in the future. Numerous Draconis Combine WarShip classes led by the capable *Kirishima* cruisers showed that they were a power to be reckoned with, and the Lyran *Mjolnir* promised destruction to anyone who threatened them.

And then the Fifth Succession War started with a bang. Literally. Sharilar Mori's exit from this mortal coil was the final straw, and the Terran Supremacy quickly revealed the results of its *Dante* and *Tiamat* Projects to anyone they thought might be responsible. Or might have known. Or might have suspected. Or might have quietly cheered after the fact. The Great Houses did not enjoy the learning experience. The new designs proved devastating to the Houses, though the new House WarShips outperformed many of the venerable Star League designs the Supremacy still used. It became the greatest war in centuries. WarShips died in numbers not seen since the Second Succession War, and even the Terran Supremacy lost many dear and famous ships.

Thirty years have past since the Fifth Succession War began and many worlds have changed hands. The new generation of WarShips and the latest generation Pocket WarShips have smashed all comers, forcing even the Terran Supremacy to reconsider the superiority of its existing WarShip fleet. The Periphery Realms have made progress against the Great Houses, taking many rich systems, and of course the Free Worlds League and Confederated Suns have lost many systems to other Houses. The war rages ever on and on, and where it ends nobody knows.



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THE TERRAN SUPREMACY

Tracing its history and legacy back to Norm McKenna's TAS *Pathfinder*, the Terran navy has an unrivaled tradition of excellence. Through James McKenna's TAS *Dreadnought*, on to famous names like *Thunderer*, *Richelie*, and *Barham*, and onto *McKenna's Pride*, the Terran navy has taken all comers and broken them.

Terran naval ratings have the best training, Terran officers come from the best Terran families, and Terran uniforms are the best in the Inner Sphere. The Terran navy is the best at everything they do, and they know it. Terran courage is enough to weather the most deadly drone swarms, Terran training is enough to repair any damage, and Terran minds have already invented the best responses to any threat. No gaggle of outer worlds neo barbarians have ever threatened their supremacy.

The strategists of the Terran navy have written every book worth reading on interstellar tactics. Terran engineers have designed every system worth using on starships. And Terran weapons officers have destroyed every jumped up realm of neobarbs who think they can match their betters.

This may seem like strong language, but one must always remember when dealing with the Terran Supremacy that they truly believe this. They are the best. They have always won. And so they will always win in the future. This is a matter of faith to them. It is in fact *more* than faith. Faith is the act of believing something that cannot be proven. The Terran navy has *proven* over nearly a millennium of war that they are the best and they are unbeatable.

Even when faced with the greatest drone defenses built by their own engineers, the Terran navy still broke every defense and rained fire down on the men who betrayed them. The Terran navy has never broken. And though they have sometimes been beaten, they have always come back and grasped vengeance for those they lost. No star nation has ever *defeated* them.

And so it is a bedrock certainty of the Terran navy that they will always be victorious. They have seen many names in humanity's millennium of space travel. But whatever the name of the political unit they protect, they will always be the *Terran* navy. And that simple fact makes them the best.

There are many drawbacks to this mentality of course. The Succession Wars have bled them white when Terran commanders refused to retreat from a battle they didn't need to win. For the glory of Terra of course. They have lost ships that other nations would have willingly fled battle to save. Of course it has earned them a fearful respect from the other nations. No one wants to face a Terran battle squadron after all.

Another issue is that the Terran navy suffers from a severe case of "not invented here" syndrome. When the Periphery began arming DropShips with WarShip weapons they thought the new ships were cute little toys for minor nations that couldn't afford a *real* fleet. The Terran navy had sailed over four hundred operating WarShips out of Amaris' betrayal, and there were many more ships they could salvage from the boneyards of that war if needed. No number of armed *Unions* and *Leopards*

would be a threat to a real navy, but the Houses didn't have real fleets.

It took the Terran navy decades to begin arming their *Pentagons* and later *Titans* to match, and centuries to build true, from the keel, Pocket WarShips. Of course it was never in answer to the real ships they lost to the little minnows the Houses had begun to deploy. It wouldn't due to admit someone else had come up with the idea first after all. Instead they were billed as recreations of Pre-Star League Terran Alliance Parasite WarShips. And so Terran bureaucrats and strategists alike were content in the knowledge that they really had thought up the Pocket WarShips first and life was good.

This institutional unwillingness to compromise may have killed a lesser navy, but the Terran navy is *not* a lesser navy. It is still the largest, heaviest, and best-trained navy in known space. They have modified their tactics over the years to take into account the new Pocket WarShips, though all new tactics have been carefully researched from ancient Terran Alliance tactical manuals. They were not learned from fighting the lesser Houses, or from the tactical overviews given by Periphery observers. And any Terran officer who wanted to get the tactics approved had better *find* a way to prove they came from those old tactical manuals, or else.

Where entire squadrons of WarShips once did battle, the modern Terran Supremacy Navy rarely sees more than five or six WarShips assembled for a single operation. Most of these fleets have around a dozen *Tiamat*-class Pocket WarShips permanently assigned to them, and many more *Tiamat*, *Dragau*, *Titan*, and *Pentagon* squadrons operate via central JumpShip reserve fleets. Strand practice

places individual WarShips in command of a dozen Pocket WarShips in battle, while a full Supremacy fleet consists of dozens of Pocket WarShips supporting a single WarShip squadron.

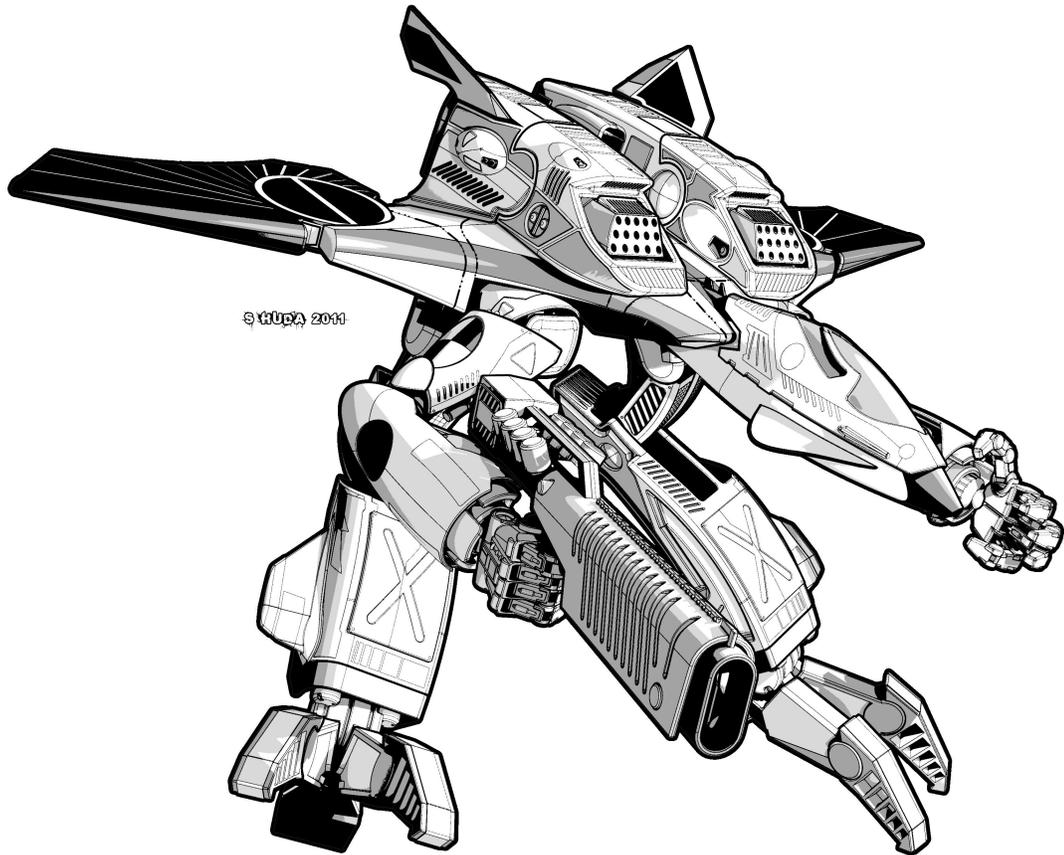
Since the beginning of the Fifth Succession War, the Terran Supremacy has been outfitting their fleets with the new *Spectral*-class OmniFighters built on Terra. Superior to previous AeroSpace Fighter classes, the *Spectrals* have been making names for themselves. Most of the names foreign powers give them are unprintable in this document, but rest assured that the *Spectral* program has been an unmitigated success. The only drawback to the program is that Spectral production has not yet met prewar projections. This has forced many key commands to continue using older equipment, and very few commands have received their full complement of *Spectral* OmniFighters.

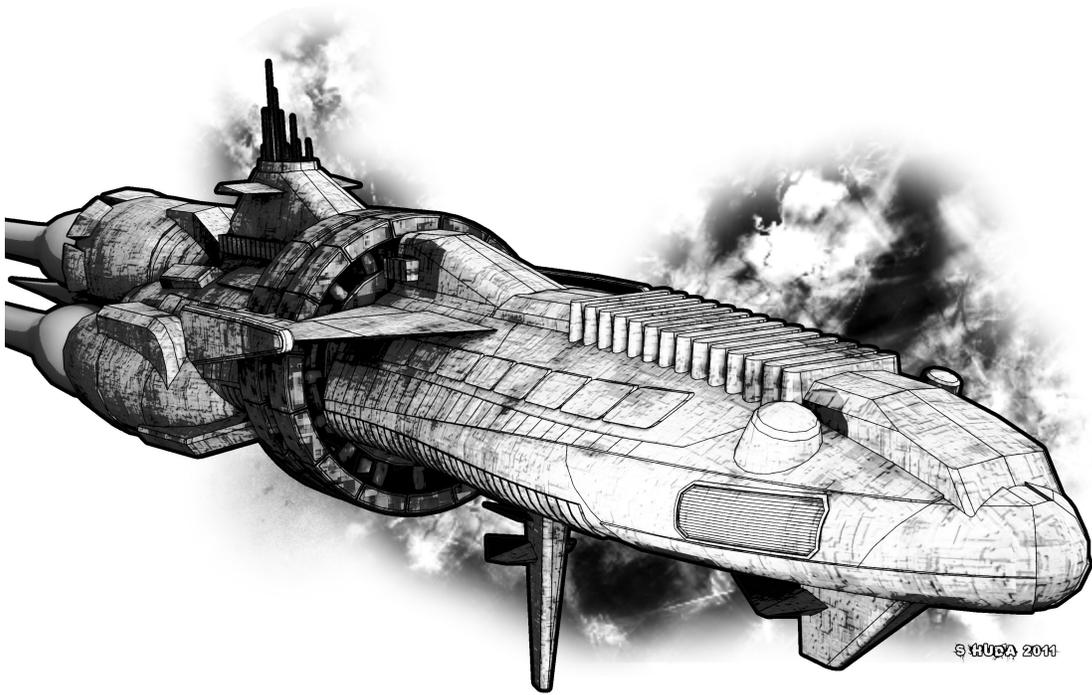
Of slightly less success is the *Spectral* Land AirMech program. Advertised as a revolution in LAM technology, final production *Spectral* LAMs are superior to all other LAMs, but the promised ten-fold improvement in capabilities has not been realized. Supremacy engineers continue to work on improved *Spectral* designs, but in the meantime the new *Spectral* LAMs are used by all major fleet formations to support landing actions and to scout for army formations. Relatively few *Spectral* LAMs have yet been assigned to army formations, and so most of them continue to use older LAMs.

In conclusion, the Terran Supremacy Navy is the largest, heaviest, most advanced, best trained, and most professional navy in the known universe. Should one seek to do battle with them, it would be wise to put your affairs in order before doing so.

TERRAN SUPREMACY NAVY

McKenna-class Duke of York and McKenna's Pride
Texas-class Mountbatten and Prinz Eugen
Atreus-class General Aleksandr Kerensky
Black Lion-class Implacable and Michael Norman
Cameron-class Admiral Girda Cameron and Electa
Sovetskii Soyuz-class Kharkarov and White Cloud
Kimagure-class Admiral Russel Nga and Conqueror
Aegis-class Minotaur and St. Lawrence
Congress-class Admiral Perry, Anchorage, and Long March
Dante-class Perdition and Salvation
Lola III-class Leander and Ranger
Essex-class Marseilles and Sharon
*Vincent MK 39-class Badger, Determination, Hunin, Jackson, Mississippi Queen,
Munin, Pegasus, and Resilience*
Thera-class Ark Royal
Potemkin-class Bonaventure and Titanic
Volga-class Provider and Tenacity
Newgrange-class Longbeach
Faslane-class Plymouth and Portsmouth





THE GREAT HOUSES OF THE INNER SPHERE

The Five Great Houses of Kurita, Davion, Liao, Marik, and Steiner have long played second fiddle to Terra. Formed by powerful families and alliances abandoned by Terra when it stopped looking outward, the rise of the Five Great Houses changed the course of history. With Terra uninterested in further expansion, the scions of these families pulled together a dozen or so worlds each into mutual alliances that would expand into some of the largest and richest nations in history. Some did it through diplomacy and some did it through conquest, but they would all head some of the most powerful nations in existence.

Even so Terra could break them when she flexed her muscles. While privately uncertain of the idea of the Star League, the Houses recognized that if they didn't agree to the new union the Terrans would just stomp them and bring them into the union a bit worse for wear. And if they joined by choice they would get the chance to beat the stuffing out of the Peripheral realms that had blocked their outward expansion, just as they had blocked Terra's.

As it turned out, the regularly scheduled beatings of Peripheral scum did not go as planned. Davion mercenaries that were most assuredly *not* sent by New Avalon fought Combine and Terran troops in the Outworlds Alliance. The Rim Worlds proved difficult for the Steiners to take, and an Archon crazy with loss after her child was kidnapped killed many of her own troops. The Magistracy of Canopus delayed the Mariks until victory was assured and then peacefully surrendered

in exchange for swift rebuilding efforts. The Taurian Concord meanwhile shattered the Davion forces on their border and proceeded to fight the Terran reinforcements for twenty years before surrendering.

Without Terra to back up their devastated armies and navies, the Great Houses never would have conquered the Peripheral nations. They spent the Star League years rebuilding their armies and navies with newer technologies and better designs. But they were ever behind the scientists of Terra. Though none of them would ever admit it in public, each of the Great Houses yearned to supplant Terra as the ultimate power in the galaxy. They simply could not come up with a plan to do it.

As it happened a Peripheral realm was the first to execute such a plan. With an emphasis on the term execute. With the entire Cameron family dead and Terra taken over, the new self-proclaimed Stefan Amaris of Terra told Star League General Kerensky to go off and have carnal relations with a goat. Or whatever it was Russians did for fun. Kerensky did not take kindly to the ultimatum nor the slaughter of the Camerons and rallied the Star League Army to unseat the usurper.

The Great Houses saw this as their best chance to supplant Terra and sat back as the Terran armies tore each other apart. They assumed that no matter who won, the shattered remains of the Terran army would be easy pickings for the Household armies. Each House Lord had visions of ruling Terra and dictating to the rest of humanity. They underestimated the

ferocity with which Kerensky's soldiers would fight, and they overestimated the amount of destruction the civil war could create on Terra.

When Kerensky won with enough surviving troops to still dominate them, the House Lords panicked. They took away Kerensky's commission in hopes of destabilizing the situation in Terran space, but the Star League Army continued to follow him. Then a sniper that absolutely no House ever admitted to sending killed Kerensky and DeChavilier took his place.

The new general proved to be far more aggressive than his mentor and he quickly told the House Lords to attend to their own goats before he killed them all. He quickly helped the Peripheral realms rebuild their armies and navies while his Terran armies and fleets took the war to the Houses. They did their best but both Terran and Peripheral armed forces soon commenced regularly scheduled beatings of the Household armies and navies. It was not a good time to be a Great House.

The Houses had to adapt or die. As in the time of the Star League, they adapted. When the Peripheral realms threw *Super Leopards* and *Super Unions* at them, the Houses upped the ante. One could place far more weapons on a *Mule*, *Overlord*, or *Excalibur* after all. And as the Succession Wars continued to rage they designed newer and more powerful Pocket WarShips to send against both the Periphery and Terra. Those new weapons would prove very powerful indeed.

House Marik would design the *Interdictor*, a powerful if small Pocket

WarShip. Lyran *Isegrims* and Kurita *Nekohono's* became the bane of many Terran and Peripheral fleets. And Davion *Aronights* and Liao *Kuan-Tis* would teach even the most overconfident Terran admiral to fear the Houses. The Terrans are exceptional at being overconfident, a trait the Houses have spent a great amount of time using to their advantage.

The Great Houses also built full-scale WarShips designed to kill Star League battlewagons. The Liao *Feng Huangs* and Davion *Avalons* have proven their metal against all comers. The Marik *Theras*, *Eagles*, and *Zechetinus* covered all angles from tiny corvettes to massive fighter carriers, while House Kurita built a balanced fleet of *Kirishimas*, *Tatsumakis*, and *Inazumas*. The Lyrans were not a surprise in that they just chose to build a big WarShip to kill their enemies. The *Mjolnir*.

The Great Houses have done well to survive the Succession Wars, though not all has been golden for them. House Marik has lost its hold over the Free Worlds League, and House Davion has lost the jewel of New Avalon. House Kurita has captured nearly half of House Davion's old territory, but like every Great House has lost vast swaths of territory to the Terran Supremacy and the Peripheral realms near them. The Great Houses are powerful but are stuck between a very strong rock and too many hard spots to deal with every threat.

As the old Chinese curse suggested, the times are interesting for everyone.

CONFEDERATED SUNS NAVY

The Confederated Suns sports the largest of the surviving House navies, including some old Star League WarShips and several Succession Wars-era *Avalons*,

Feng Huangs, and some *Davions*. Even after recent heavy losses to House Kurita and the Supremacy, they are a force to be reckoned with.

Texas-class Indefatigable and Elias Jung Liao
Avalon-class Hanse Davion and Lucien Davion
Feng Huang-class Aleisha Kris and Franco Martell
Aegis-class Eagle Eye and Aleisha Liao
Congress-class Covenant and Hotspur
Riga I-class Jasmine Liao and Duncan Liao
Davion II-class Charles Davion and Davion's Heart
Baron-class Terrance Liao and Victoria Matthews
Vincent MK 39-class Xizang, Zhejiang, and Anhui
Vigilant-class Illustrious
Potemkin-class Durandel and Edmund Salindar
Volga-class Beneficence and Salicia Liao

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE NAVY

Many consider the Free Worlds League to have the most powerful House navy. Commanded by three *Thera*-class supercarriers, two *Atreus*-class battleships, and supported by an impressive number of frigates and destroyers, it should be a viable threat to her enemies. Unfortunately the political

chaos between the Pro-Halas and Pro-Marik factions has affected the military's command and control. *Sardis* and *Marik* as an example have disregarded numerous orders sent from Atreus when an Outer League world was in danger.

Thera-class Santorini, Corinth, and Sardis
Atreus-class Marik and Regulus
Black Lion-class Xanthos and Balios
Aegis-class Olympic and Nueva Badajoz
Riga I-class Raven and Shrack
Eagle-class Lancelot and Percival
Lola III-class Courage
Baron-class Cerberus, Chimera, Gorgon, and Minotaur
Zechetinu I-class Attica and Karelia
Vincent MK 39-class Liberty
Vigilant-class Griffin and Hippogriff
Mako-class Geryon and Typhon
Potemkin-class Helios

DRACONIS COMBINE NAVY

The Draconis Combine navy has proven to be the most effective of the House navies, especially in recent decades. While it lacks heavy battleship support, large numbers of cruisers, frigates, and destroyers give it a mobility others have

not matched. Succession Wars-era designs like the *Kirishima*, *Kyushu*, *Tatsumaki*, and *Inazuma* have proven extremely effective when facing both Terran and Davion-Liao forces.

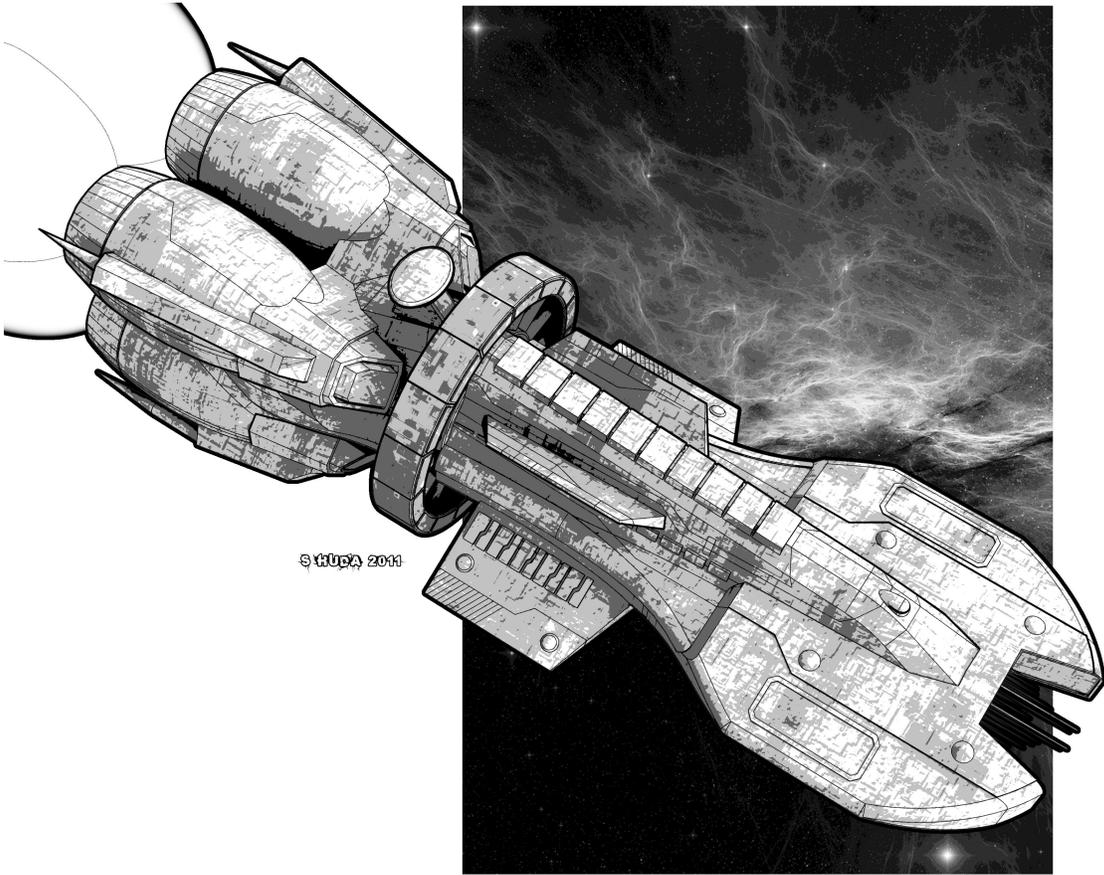
Monsoon-class Divine Wind
Kirishima-class Urizen II and Shiro
Aegis-class Atago and Suzuya
Kyushu-class Dieron Star
Riga I-class Arrow Wind
Carson-class Summit Wind and Island Wind
Tatsumaki II-class The Dragon's Last Tear
Baron-class Yedo and Hidetada
Inazuma-class Winds of Heaven and Amber Lotus
Vincent MK 39-class Heavenly Wind and Favorable Wind
Potemkin-class Kamikawa Maru and Kiyokawa Maru
Volga-class Kimikawa Maru and Kobayashi Maru

LYRAN COMMONWEALTH NAVY

While the Lyran Commonwealth has a reputation for going big or going home, they make little use of battleship-class WarShips in their navy. The navy prefers battlecruisers and smaller classes in a mix that has shown itself to be

modestly effective over the centuries. While they have lost territory to the Terran Supremacy, the Lyran mix has done well against other neighbors. This has made them a well-respected navy throughout the Succession Wars.

Mjolnir-class Yggdrasil
Tharkad-class Invincible and Skye
Commonwealth II-class Arc-Royal and Furillo
Aegis-class Tamar
Eagle-class Katherine Steiner
Congress-class Seth Marsden and Kevin Tamar
Essex-class Robert Kelswa and Melissa Steiner
Baron-class Alistair Marsden and Robert Marsden
Mako-class Zerstoror, Narvik, and Elbing
Vincent MK 39-class Blucher and Hansa
Volga-class StarCorp Stargazer and Defiance Defender
Sylvester-class TharHes Traveller and Shipil Starlifter



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THE PERIPHERY STATES

The Periphery States are a study in contrasts. On one side you have one of the most unapologetically militant nations in the Human Sphere, and on another you have a nation that literally practices the art of making love rather than war. Elsewhere you have the descendents of possibly the most blatantly pacifistic interstellar realm to ever exist, and on the other side of the Sphere the descendents of the realm that started the second most devastating war in human history hangs its flag. By Periphery measurements.

In the old Taurian Concordat one can find the center of the third oldest WarShip industry in existence. The old Federated Suns beat them to production by four years. The Magistracy built their first WarShip only after it became obvious that the Inner Sphere was uniting against the Periphery States. The old Outworlds Alliance never built WarShips of their own. And while the Rim Worlds Republic had an impressive number of warship yards during the Star League, they lost most of them first to the Star League Army and then to the Lyran juggernaut after the Civil War.

The Star League years were difficult for the Periphery States in many ways. The Star League tried to replace their existing schools with blatantly pro-Star League indoctrination and did their best to reduce Periphery industries below sustainable levels. The Star League enforced economies that depended on imports from loyal Star League systems and Periphery military industries literally moved underground to avoid detection and destruction.

The end of the Star League and the grand economies of scale that supported it should have destroyed the

Periphery States. The loss of trade alone would have sent their economies into a tailspin once their spare parts ran out. They lacked the infrastructure to maintain what WarShip fleets they had without sending them to the Inner Sphere for deep maintenance once every ten years. And too many of their worlds depended on Star League inventions to keep them habitable. Projections of the time forecasted a loss of between half and three-quarters of their worlds and more of their ships by the 29th Century.

General Aaron DeChavilier of the newborn Terran Supremacy saw that possibility and decided to make certain it did not happen. He didn't do it out of the kindness of his heart and his love for all things Periphery of course. He saw the new Terran State surrounded by powerful Great Houses and knew he needed allies to distract them. The Periphery was his greatest shot of obtaining such allies and offered to send them aid in rebuilding their economic and military power.

The Periphery States agreed to his offer and Terran aid followed quickly thereafter. DeChavilier parceled out one hundred of his remaining WarShips to the Periphery States as extended loans until they could stabilize. This allowed them to stand against the Great Houses with a chance of winning. He sent dozens of regiments of the old Star League Army into their territories to work with their local armies, and many of the very best Star League engineering regiments to build new commercial and military factories. He even sent several of his remaining yard ships to help build a new WarShip industry in the Periphery. Whether those yard ships were lost in the intervening centuries,

returned to Terran service, or continue to work in hiding is a secret even my best agents could not uncover.

The Periphery States were not content to be reliant on Terran generosity to survive though. They soon began launching *Super Leopards* and *Super Unions* to fight alongside the Star League WarShips against the Great House fleets. Whether those “Pocket WarShips” as they became known were new designs built after the fall of the Star League or secret ships built under the nose of Star League inspectors is a question the Periphery States have never answered. The conspiracy theories are as numerous as the *Super Leopards* and *Super Unions* themselves. What is known is that those Pocket WarShips helped to turn the First Succession War in the favor of the Periphery States. And it helped the Terran Supremacy by securing the attention of the Great Houses towards their outer borders.

The Great Houses answered with their own conversions of larger DropShips into Pocket WarShips and the Periphery copied them. They produced the larger Pocket WarShips and then the Terrans introduced something new. Terran commanders in the Periphery recognized the capabilities of the Pocket WarShips even if their superiors back home dismissed them as tiny little toys not worth the time, and soon began refitting many of their *Pentagon* and *Titan* DropShips. It is ironic that the first Terran Pocket WarShips served in the Periphery, fought with Periphery fleets, and learned the doctrine of how to fight them from Periphery crews.

Many of those first *Pentagon* and *Titan* Pocket WarShips still serve today as part of the Periphery navies. And once Terra recognized them as useful combatants the prototype *Dragau* and

Tiamat Pocket WarShips would serve in the Periphery as well. They used the Periphery States to test and refine their designs before putting them into full production back home. The Periphery States continue to use and build those Terran Pocket WarShips, though in relatively small numbers compared to the standard designs.

Centuries of fighting side-by-side and living in the Periphery have made the old Terran fleets part of the Periphery in every way that matters. They draw their crews from Terran enclaves established centuries ago, but they have long been bound to their adoptive worlds by the ties of marriage and blood. They’ve “gone native” as the Terran Supremacy lists them. There are other more derogatory phrases but those are rarely used in polite company.

The modern Periphery fleets are centered on the surviving Periphery and Terran WarShips, with Pocket WarShips assigned to support them. All Periphery States also assign squadrons of Pocket WarShips to central JumpShip fleets as quick reaction forces to support the main fleets or to slow enemy incursions long enough for the fleets to arrive. The Periphery States also make innovative uses of LAMs in their fleets. Periphery LAMs have been known to blast their way inside enemy WarShips before tearing them apart from the inside. Casualties tend to be high in such attacks though, so these are relatively rare.

In conclusion, the Periphery fleets have suffered from centuries of oppression under the Star League, and losses against the Great Houses, but their heavy use of Pocket WarShips allows them to match their larger opponents in battle. This has made them powerful allies of the Terran Supremacy in the long war against the Great Houses.

MAGISTRACY OF TAURUS NAVY

The largest of the Periphery navies, the combination of the old Magistracy and Taurian fleets does not always work as perfectly as wished. There are those on both sides who remember times when they fought each

other, and disagreements over who is in charge of joint operations are not uncommon. The fleet is spread out over a large front though, making such unhappy unions fairly rare.

Avatar-class Jamestown
Aegis-class Samantha Calderon
Athena-class Kossandra Centrella and Aphrodite
Quixote-class Artemis and Sterope
Riga I-class Persephone
Lola II-class Eris and Haven
Naga-class Hecate and Nike
Essex-class Perdition
Carson-class Maia and Electra
Baron-class Hera and Robsart
Pinto-class Celentaro, Ishtar, Royal Foxx, Stiletto, and Thraxa
Vincent MK 39-class Vandenberg and Morrigan
Potemkin-class Demeter and Hell's Heart
Sylvester-class Ceres

OUTWORLDS PACT NAVY

The Outworlds is home to the best AeroSpace pilots in the Human Sphere. There are even continual rumors of genetic engineering towards creating humans better able to fly them. Whether or not they are true, Outworlds fleet

formations consider the AeroSpace Fighters to be their primary assault force, with the WarShips called in to support only when the fighters are not capable of driving off the enemy alone.

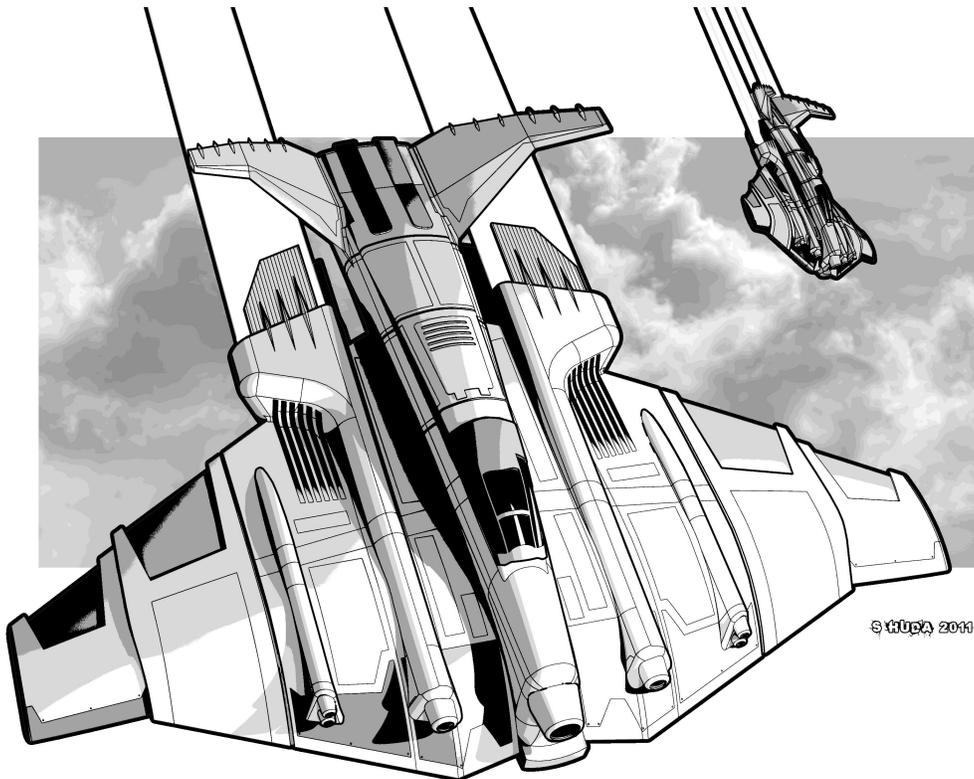
Aegis-class Elias Pitcairn
Cruiser-class Welkens Nordd
Congress-class Julius Avellar
Narukami I-class Fukushu
Baron-class Baliggora and Ramora
Pinto-class Pulsar and Red Dwarf
Vincent MK 39-class Alpheratz, Cerberus, and Santiago
Vigilant-class Bahamut and Tiamat
Potemkin-class Alliance and Quatre Belle

RIM FEDERATION NAVY

The Rim Federation Navy owes its existence to the Terran Supremacy. The old Rim Worlds were under total Terran occupation after the fall of the Star League, and it was only Terran gifts that gave them any WarShips at all.

Many Terran officers to this day have served on the Rim and many prospective Rim officers train on Terra. This has created a strong alliance between the small Rim navy and the much larger Terran navy.

Aegis-class Derfflinger and Lutzow
Commonwealth I-class Von der Tann
Riga I-class Blucher and Nurenburg
Quixote-class Molke and Seydlitz
Essex-class Dresden and Emden
Pinto-class Augsburg, Coln, Kolberg, and Mainz
Sylvester-class Konigsburg and Wiesbaden

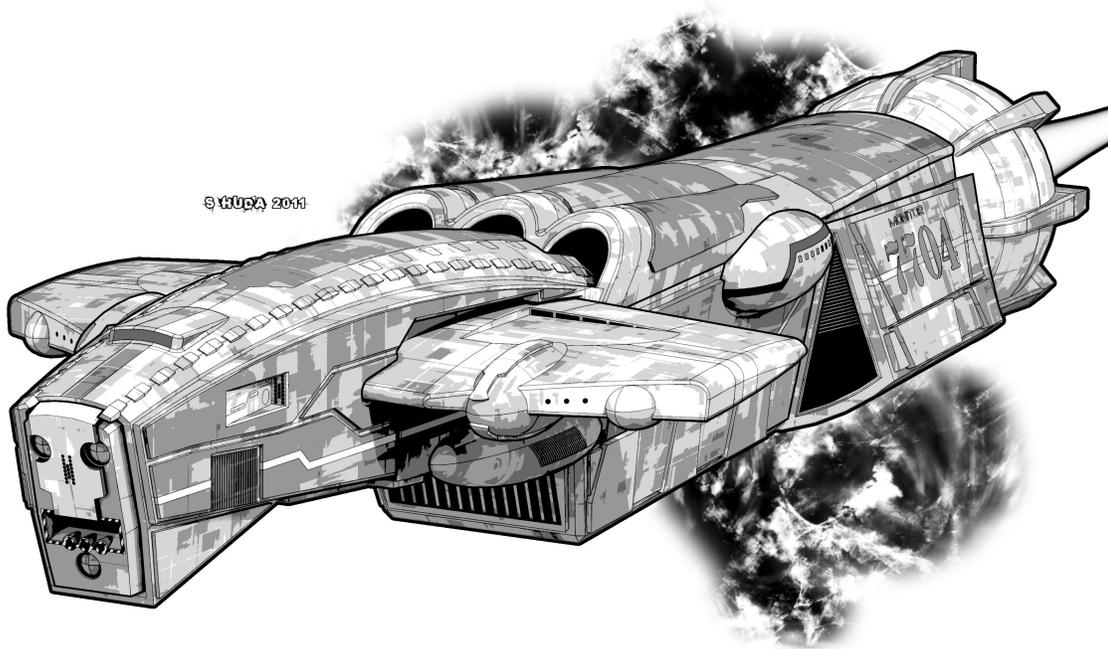


OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENT 1

EXPANDED FLEETS

Everyone knows that each nation has between two and four-dozen WarShips in service. We know each nation has a few ships in mothballed reserve but that they rarely call them into action due to numerous issues. The number of trained naval officers it takes to run a fleet, the yard capacity it takes to maintain the fleet, and some even suggest it is a mutual agreement to avoid a new arms race between the great powers. The last theory has a beautiful simplicity to it that I like.

But to be clear, I think all of those theories are lies. Or more accurately I believe that they are explanations trying to make sense out of a lie. What is the lie you ask? I believe the lie is that each nation only has two dozen active WarShips. Why? The reasons are many. Trust me when I say that I have spent years studying the situation. And I believe I have found enough information to prove that the great powers are lying to us about how many WarShips remain in the Human Sphere.



THE TERRAN SUPREMACY

I could write for hours about each ship on this list. Rumors abound of Terran engineers working on the ancient abandoned *Enterprise*, a supercarrier that could make a *Thera* run in fear. And what about the Furious Four? *Farragut*, *Thunderer*, *Dreadnought*, and *Fearless* welcome citizen tours in Earth orbit on an hourly basis. But many rumors say they were destroyed in the age of the Star League. Are they the real ships or elaborate reconstructions? If war came to Earth again can they fight?

Are the rumors of *Manassas*' technological superiority true? I remember the stories that came with her after her return from the "deep survey mission" they claim she was on. And I've been to the other side of the border where the Draconis Combine named Captain Cromwell the Yellow Bird of Destiny. A hero of the past returning to take revenge on them for staying out of

the Star League Civil War? I'd have some names for him too. They just probably wouldn't be as printable. *Manassas* tore through the *Riga II*-class *Lioness* first, and then pounded another dozen Combine WarShips to paste on her drive to Terra. I was there when the tugs pulled her into Titan Yards and I could barely believe she was a WarShip she'd been hammered so hard. But she made it home. The question I ask is whether or not she will fly again. If Admiral Cromwell has anything to say about it, I believe she will.

Every WarShip of Terra has a name that goes back centuries, with stories that seem amazing by the standards of other navies. But that is the nature of the Terran Supremacy Navy. It is the oldest, the largest, and the best navy to ever sail the black. It only makes sense that whatever reserves they can call upon are equally impressive.

Enterprise-class Enterprise

McKenna-class Caph

Texas-class Perth and Wales

Farragut-class Farragut

Monsoon-class Thunderer

Dreadnought-class Dreadnought

Luxor-class Fearless

Black Lion-class Admiral William S. Preston

Cameron-class Incense and Lady Shandra

Sovetskii Soyuz-class Athena and Budapest

Kimagure-class Lakshmi and Surprise

Aegis-class Alexander, Manassas, and E. Presley

Congress-class Beowulf, Green Lantern, and Noble House

Dante-class Montpellier and Narbonne

Riga II-class Courageous and Glorious

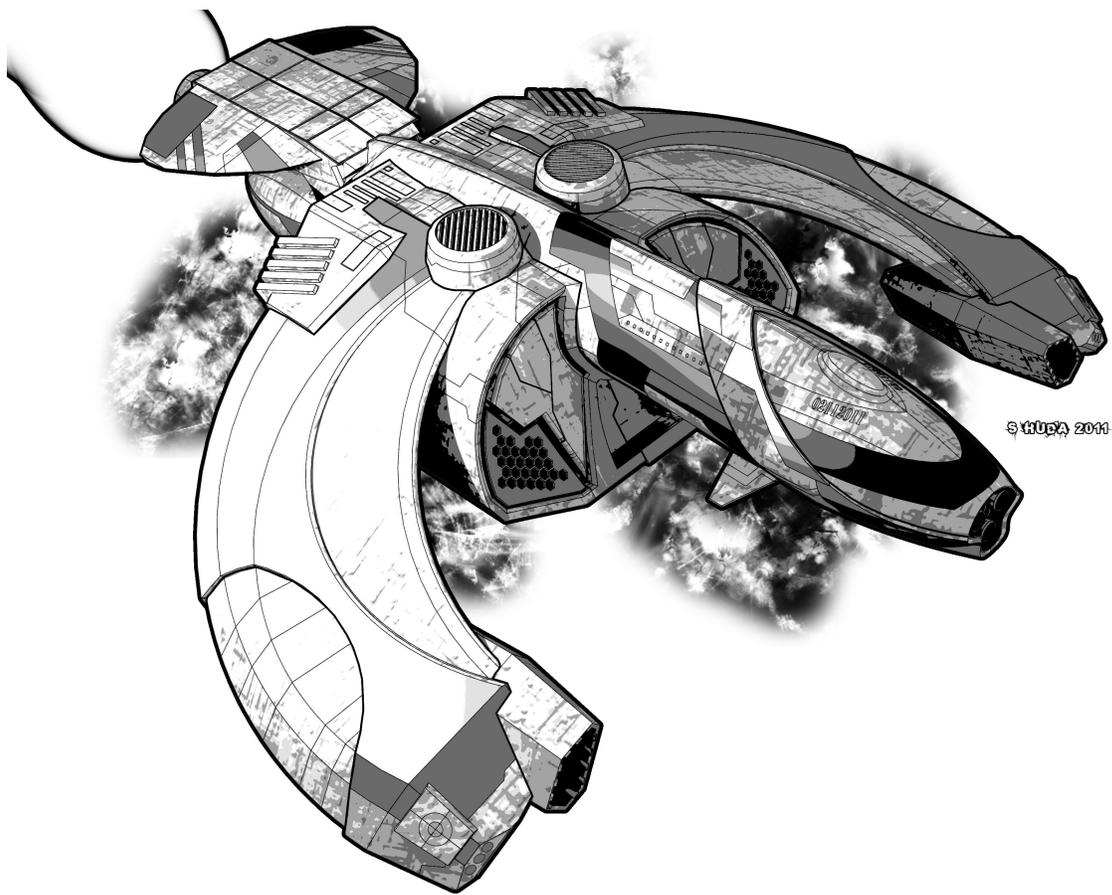
Lola III-class Darius, Nelson, and Warlock

Essex-class Eagle, Oslo, and Tracy

Baron-class Lancaster and Templeton

Vincent MK 39-class Centaur, Crowned Lion, Hertzog's Staff, Mars, Trump and Valiant

Bonaventure-class Sheridan



THE CONFEDERATED SUNS

The Confederated Suns Navy has been badly ravaged in recent decades by a Combine Navy eager to prove itself after the *Manassas* ripped them apart. But they still have impressive reserves to call on if they can pull together the resources. The ancient *Golden Lion* is one example. She protected New Avalon until the very end, savaging several Combine WarShips and spiriting a small refugee fleet out from under *Divine Wind's* guns. Surely the Confederated Suns will repair her. She would want to be at the forefront of any attempt to liberate New Avalon.

Then there is the *Enterprise*. Yes, the Davions have one too. And she's a carrier. There are many interesting rumors about her though. Rumors say she wasn't originally a *New Syrtis*-class carrier but something called

a *Kitty Hawk*-class. I haven't found any information on that class, but the conspiracy theorists claim that is because the records were lost with the fall of New Avalon. I call bullocks on that argument, but stories will always surround her strange parentage I think.

Then there are the ancient museum ships like *Jasmine Liao*, *Typhon*, *Chesterton*, and *Kentares*. Will any of these be reactivated? I will say this. If now is not the time to do it there never will be. The Confederated Suns will need everything they can muster to throw the Combine off New Avalon and the surrounding systems. Assuming of course that is their plan. There are rumors of course that the Celestial Throne has little care for the Davion side of the union. It will be interesting to see what happens in the future.

Du Shi Wang-class *Jasmine Liao*
Defender-class *Golden Lion*
Black Lion I-class *Typhon*
Soyal-class *Chesterton*, *Liao*, *Sarna*, and *Victoria*
New Syrtis-class *Enterprise*, *New Syrtis*, and *Pleiades*
Lola I-class *Gao Yao*
Essex I-class *Guan Yu*
Davion I-class *Adam Davion*
Davion II-class *Katherine Davion*, and *Paul Davion*
Whirlwind-class *Robert Davion*
Cruiser-class *Kentares*
Carson-class *Lung Mo*
Vincent MK 39-class *Cao Guojiu*, *He Xiang*, and *Rostock*
Vigilant-class *Lan Caihe*, and *Zhang Guolao*
Robinson-class *Woodbine*

THE FREE WORLDS LEAGUE

I have spent years tracking down stories of ships the Free Worlds League could bring online if my information is accurate. The introduction of the *Thera*-class supercarrier promised a revolution in naval warfare, and with it the League designers built new WarShips to escort the sisters. The *Eagles* and *Zechetinus* were the fleet of the future that everyone knew would replace every older WarShip. But the Confederated Suns decided they were going to place their vote on the matter. They challenged the most modern navy in existence, and utterly shattered it.

The supercarriers *Thessaly* and *Delphi* died when a *Soyal* squadron hit them in the flank at the Battle of Oriente, and their battlegroups died with them. The battleship *Oriente* called on the few surviving WarShips to hold the line as every ship that could fly began to evacuate the system. She hammered the *Soyal*-class *Liao* and *Sarna* to scrap, and a desperate counterattack by the remaining smaller WarShips smashed *New Syrtis* and her escorts before turning to run. But the battle ravaged the League navy. The combined survivors of Oriente homefleet and two carrier battlegroups were *Oriente*, *Percival* and *Scorpion*. Only *Percival* has ever seen combat again. *Scorpion* is critically

damaged and officially retired, while *Oriente* is currently home to the Duke of Oriente and acting capital of the Duchy of Oriente in orbit over Atreus.

The League has lost many other *Eagles* and *Zechetinus* to Davion-Liao, Terran, Taurian, and Lyran attackers. Others have limped home and shut down in orbit around various yards, waiting for repairs that never seem to come. There are always other ships in critical need of repairs in these turbulent times.

But what of the ships the “Fleet of the Future” replaced? The ancient *League* and *Mako* classes have served the League well for hundreds of years. Even old *Black Lions*, *Aegis*, and captured *Soyals* did well for themselves before the advent of the *Theras*. Where are they now?

My sources tell me that many of those ships remain squirreled away in dark system boneyards and could be brought online if enough resources were devoted to them. If Parliament or the Captain-General or whoever thinks they can kick some backbone into the League government does something, perhaps the League could see a future by looking to the past. Or maybe the Free Worlds League will continue to fracture. That would be a shame from my point of view, but one never knows the future.

Atreus-class *Andurien* and *Oriente*
Soyal-class *Ladon* and *Python*
Black Lion I-class *Pegasus* and *Tulpar*
Aegis I-class *Pythia*
Eagle-class *Galahad*, *Kay*, *Mordred*, and *Tristram*
League I-class *Camlann* and *Prato*
League II-class *Bolan*, *Hydra*, *Lancaster*, *Siren*, and *Tiber*
Zechetinu I-class *Sparta*
Zechetinu II-class *Loxida*, *Opilione*, and *Scorpion*
Vigilant-class *Sphinx*
Mako-class *Arges*, *Brontes*, and *Steropes*

THE DRACONIS COMBINE

The Draconis Combine Navy has proved itself a powerful force against all comers in the centuries since the fall of the Star League. It's been particularly active in the last fifty years and has taken heavy losses doing it. How many of those ships can be rebuilt or replaced? Few know the answer to that, but I do have some interesting information.

First is a rare *Farragut*-class battleship. How did a House get one? Money, bribery, or something else? *Ryu* used to be the flagship of the Combine navy if the stories are true. They say that she and the Davion *Enterprise* fought each other during the early days of the Star League. They've faced each other numerous times since, building a reputation for always being in the thick of the most desperate battles between those two realms. The Battle of New Avalon may be their last. The damage they inflicted on each other may be mortal.

And what of *Samarkand*, the famous first WarShip of the *Samarkand*-class carriers? The Combine has meticulously preserved her over the centuries as a living piece of history, but the *Golden Lion* ripped her engines out with a well-placed salvo during the

Battle of New Avalon. Reports say she's still there, with no one capable of rebuilding those ancient drives. Will the Combine refit her with new systems or leave her in orbit as a symbol of their great victory over their hated enemy?

And one should never forget the tale of the famous *Luthien*. She defended her namesake world when the Terran Supremacy's Third Division came calling. Entire WarShip squadrons sparred over *Luthien* during that battle and many died before it ended. *Luthien* personally dispatched the *Sabre Cat* after it bombarded the surface, but suffered grievous. She rests in orbit, a museum to Combine victory and symbol of the Dragon's ability to protect all worlds from the reach of the self-styled Terran Supremacy. School children tour her on a daily basis to keep the legend of the titanic Battle of *Luthien* alive.

There are numerous stories of the Combine mothballing WarShips during times of peace or reduced conflict. The infamous *Narukamis* for instance. How many of those ships are still out there, ready to defend or fight for the honor of the Dragon? I've studied the issue for years but I still only have a vague idea. Here are my best guesses.

Farragut-class *Ryu*
Black Lion I-class *Haruna* and *Kongo*
Aegis I-class *Chikuma* and *Myoko*
Kyushu-class *Draconis Rift* and *Luthien*
Narukami I-class *Izanami*
Narukami II-class *Namikawa*
Lola I-class *Morning Wind*
Cruiser-class *Mogami* and *Nachi*
Samarkand I-class *Samarkand*
Samarkand II-class *Toruga*
Inazuma-class *Night of Agony* and *Swiping Claw*
Bonaventure-class *Georgia* and *Tamura*
Vigilant-class *Iwate* and *Wakayama*

THE LYRAN COMMONWEALTH

The Lyran Commonwealth has a well-deserved reputation for always loving large designs. The jokes about *Atlas* scouting lances aren't true of course, but maybe they use lighter *Zeus* BattleMechs for that. Or so the jokes go. When it comes to WarShips though they've never fielded large WarShips compared to others. Their standard *Tharkad*-class battlecruisers were actually lighter than the battleships used by other Houses, and they continue to anchor the main Lyran fleet to this day.

But while there are not as many *Tharkads* as there used to be during the Star League era, there are several that have not been confirmed losses. Take the *Coventry*. She and *Invincible* commanded the Lyran fleet at the Battle of Hesperus. The losses were horrendous, over a dozen Lyran WarShips wiped out in a matter hours. *Coventry* and *Invincible* fought until the very end, and then they both jumped out. Every record we have confirms this. But where is *Coventry*? *Invincible* is the flagship of the fleet and *Coventry* is...gone. Gone where? Is she the victim of a misjump? Or is she deployed to a secret Lyran base, waiting for the right time to tip the balance of power?

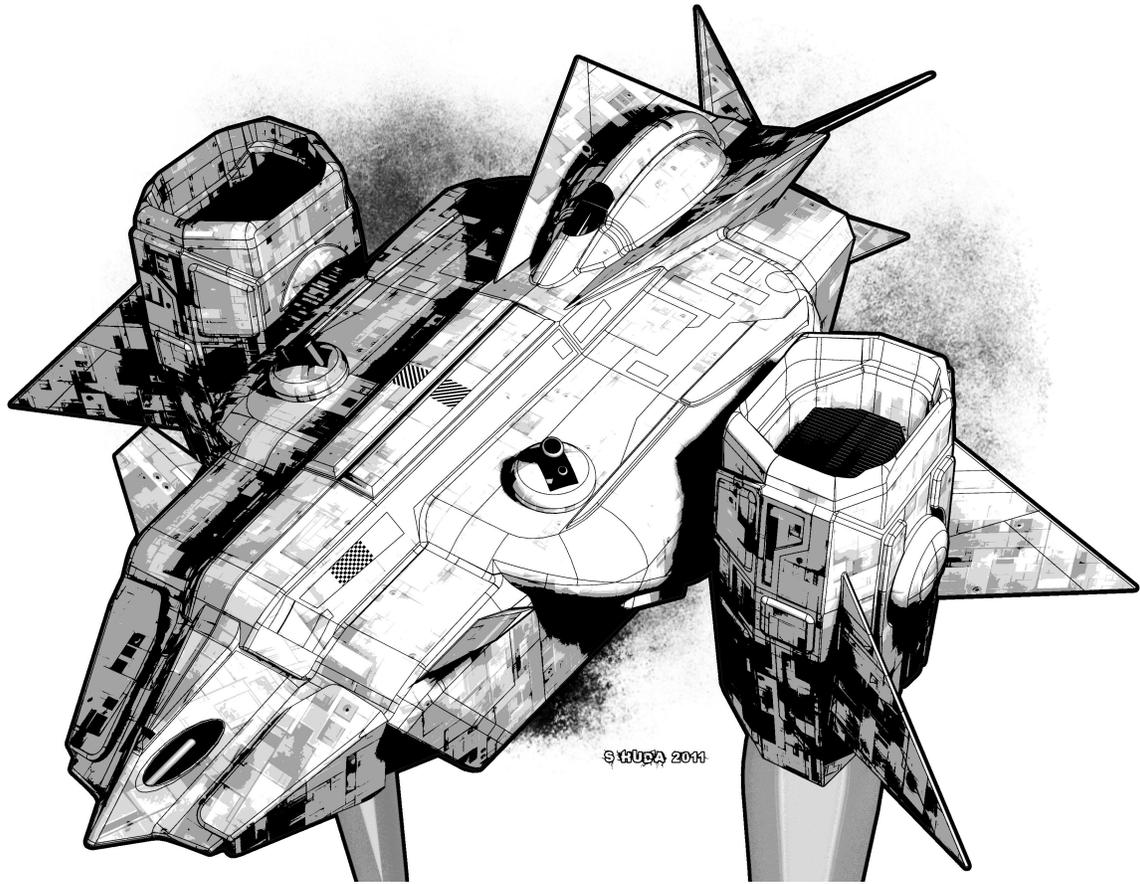
And who can forget the *Commonwealth*-class *Noisel*? She served the Lyran Commonwealth for centuries with a history of unrivaled

excellence. She fought more League, Supremacy, Combine, and Rim WarShips than nearly any other cruiser still alive in a House fleet. But half a century ago she just disappeared. What happened? I have recently received information that suggests she commanded a squadron of WarShips sent to intercept *Manassas* short of Supremacy space. They tracked down the WarShip and forced her into battle according to those reports. And *Noisel* shot a large piece off *Manassas* before the Terran ship jumped out. My information suggests that *Noisel* is currently being rebuilt with *Manassas* technology gleaned from that wreckage. If so, it would make her the most advanced WarShip in Lyran hands.

But not all ships are lost. There are those like *Thor* that are openly orbiting Lyran worlds as you read this. Museum ships open for tours of school children, or sold to local businesses and planets to act as tourist attractions. Money can buy anything in the Lyran Commonwealth, and while privately-owned and operational WarShips are not legally allowed, enough money can buy exemptions to the laws. I wonder just how many of these "private" or "museum" ships could be brought back online in a time of sufficient need?

Perhaps one day we will find out the mysterious of these lost ships.

Tharkad-class *Alexandria*, *Coventry*, and *Donegal*
Black Lion I-class *Australia*
Commonwealth I-class *Noisel*
Aegis I-class *Solaris*
Lola I-class *Michael Steiner* and *Timothy Marsden*
Essex I-class *Kevin Dinesen*, *Nels Reynolds*, and *Tracial Steiner*
Cruiser-class *Dixie*
Vigilant-class *Lutzow* and *Seydlitz*
Mako-class *Koln*, *Komet*, *Kormoran*, *Leipzig*, *Michel*, *Niobe*, *Stier*, and *Thor*



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THE PERIPHERY

The Periphery had a long history of using simple, rugged designs with innovative tactics before the days of the Star League. The Taurian fleet famously used ancient “fire ship” ramming tactics for instance, and it would take the most ruthless Terran commanders years to grind the Periphery down.

The Star League mothballed or destroyed every Periphery WarShip they could find after the invasion ended, but as the occupation stretched into decades they slowly allowed the Periphery realms to rebuild small fleets. They were too small to be a threat to anything other than pirates, filled with designs that were old when the Star League was born. The “trustworthy” Rim Worlds Republic fleet was larger and newer, but we all know how that worked out. The modern Periphery fleets continue to be filled with the castoff remains of that pre-Star League era. There are some Star League-era WarShips, but they are rare and very carefully preserved.

One of the most famous WarShips to never sail under a Periphery flag is the SLS *Tripitz*. The *Black Lion*-class battlecruiser disappeared during the Star League Civil War to the best of our knowledge. The old Taurian Concordat found it orbiting an abandoned world near New Vandenberg in 2979 and quickly began work to refurbish the old ship. She would have been the most powerful WarShip in Taurian service if they could have finished. But a large bone-white fleet attacked the recovery effort. All official records blame the “Vandenberg White Wings,” adding that ship to their list of known or suspected kills. I have recently secured information that suggests the Taurians managed to save the ship though, and

that the *Tripitz* commands a secret fleet ready to be unleashed on the Confederated Suns. That may be deliberate disinformation of course.

Next on our list is the Outworlds Pact *Argonaut*. The ancient *Aegis* was one of those ships given to the Federated Suns in an attempt to make them a credible navy during the Star League invasion of the Periphery. It did not, and the *Argonaut* suffered through decades of lackluster command and worse maintenance at their hands. They sold her to Outworlds Alliance as an act of “friendship,” though it took little time for the Outworlds to rethink those reasons. *Argonaut* is a lemon. Reports say she has spent most of her Periphery career in and out of the yards due to a never-ending series of breakdowns.

The last ship I wanted to spotlight is the Rim Federation’s *Hansa*. She was built in the early Twenty-Fourth Century by the newborn Terran Alliance, making her one of the oldest WarShips still in semi-active service. She served the Hegemony in the Taurian Campaign of the War of Terran Aggression, was later sold to the Rim Worlds Republic, and fought against Kerensky during the Star League Civil War. The Star League captured her and sent her into the Battle of Terra where she earned more honors. General DeChavilier sent her to protect the newborn Rim Federation where she has remained ever since. My reports suggest *Hansa* isn’t combat effective anymore, having been sold to the Buena Archonette as a private tour ship.

There are many more ships in the Periphery, abandoned, mothballed, or just squirreled away in places even my sources can’t find. I have no doubt that we will see some of them in the future.

THE MAGISTRACY OF TAURUS

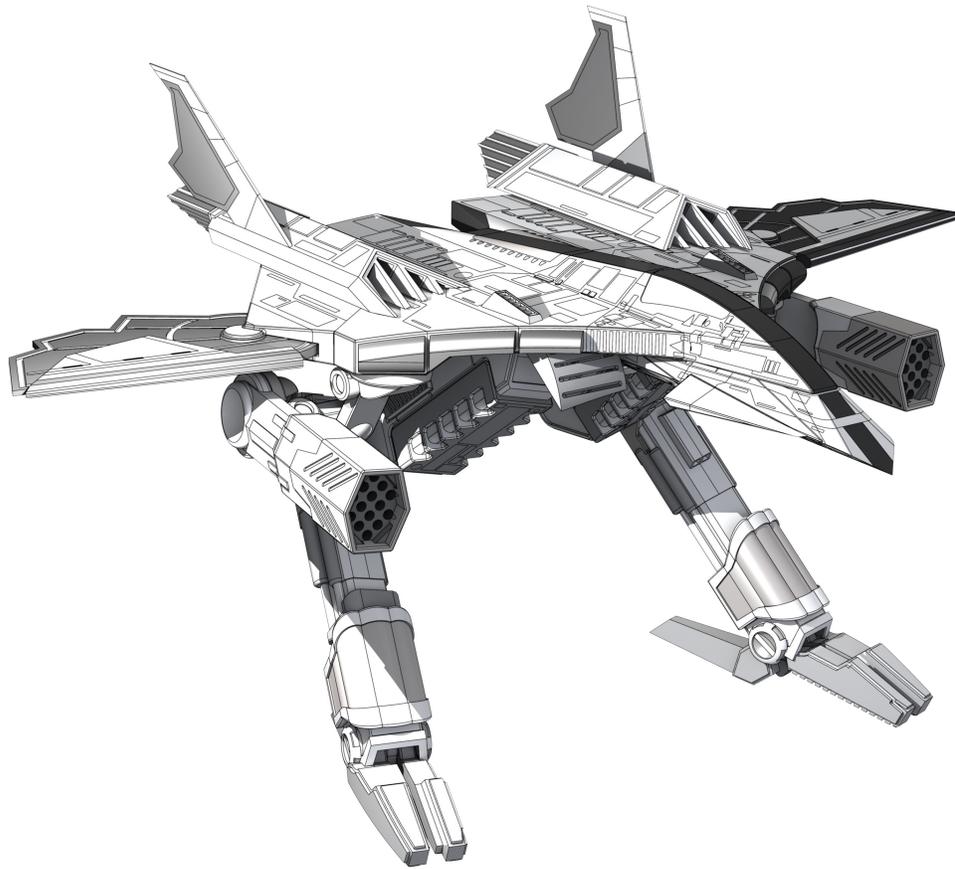
Black Lion-class Tripitz
Avatar-class Andromeda
Aegis I-class Venus and Victoria
Winchester-class Pinard
Dart-class Pleiades
Wagon Wheel-class Merope
Concordat-class Fury, Hyadum, Marantha Calderon, and Parin
Lola I-class Iris and Minerva
Pinto-class Amaterasu, Anaheim, Brigantia, Brinton, Danu, Diana, Freyja,
Laconis, Mazu, Mithron, Sif, Valentina, and Valkyrie

THE OUTWORLDS PACT

Avatar-class Parvati
Aegis I- class Argonaut and Shieldmaiden
Cruiser-class Barton Avellar, Grigori Avellar, and Rodrigo Avellar
Pinto-class Andromeda, Comet, Event Horizon, Nebula, and Spiral
Vincent MK 39-class Kazanka, Kennard, and Valentina
Vigilant-class St. George

THE RIM FEDERATION

Avatar-class Lothringen and Westfalen
Aegis I- class Baden
Riga-class Freya
Dart-class Hansa
Lola I-class Elbing
Essex I-class Pillau
Carson-class Rostock
Bonaventure-class Breslau, Niobe, and Nymphe
Pinto-class Arcona, Gazelle, Medusa, and Undine



OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENT 2

SPECIAL NAVAL PROJECTS

The official position of every major government is that they are not undertaking any new naval projects. Old Star League-style WarShips are too expensive in this modern age of Pocket WarShips and all nations have declared an unofficial moratorium on further large naval projects. Officially. I have studied the situation for years though, and it is my firm belief that the official position is more akin to the smelly leavings of a bovine than the truth.

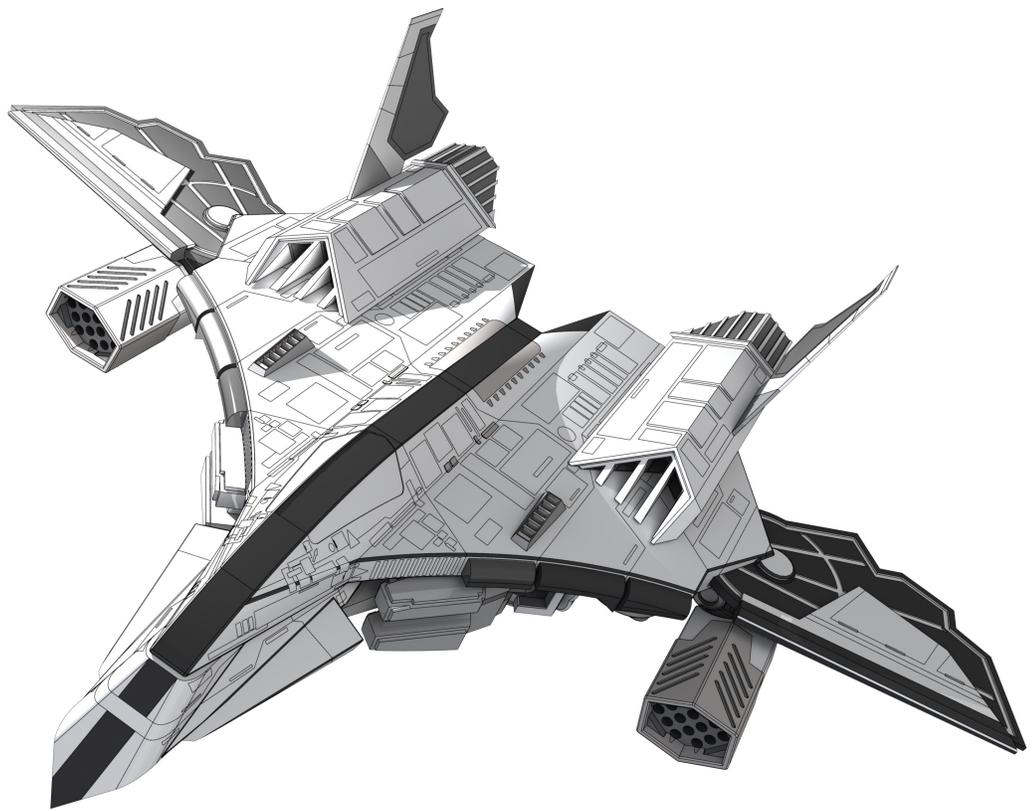
As usual I will start with the Terran Supremacy. Everyone knows about the *Spectral II* Project. Yes, I know that is not naval in scale, but it demonstrates that they will never give up on a bone when they sink their teeth into it. The *Spectral IIs* promise to be the next revolution in AeroSpace Fighter and Land-AirMech design. Yes, the current *Spectral*s are impressive, but I've seen things in the new program that make those look like antiques. On a similar vein, there are reports that the Terrans are upgrading their WarShips. One repeating rumor is that they are doubling the ASF compliments on many of their WarShips. And I've seen reliable reports of very impressive refits to the *Kimagure* and *Riga II* platforms. Finally there is one other little Terran project I've recently learned about. It is codenamed *Leviathan*, and if what I've seen is anywhere near accurate it is the largest WarShip ever built.

The Great Houses haven't deployed a new WarShip class in the last half-century, but if my sources are right that could soon change with several very interesting projects. Two small examples I've found are in the Lyran

Commonwealth and the Confederated Suns. Named *Fox* and *Fredasa*, they are very small WarShips, designed for mass production. The *Fox* name suggests a link with Hanse Davion and may support the idea that they are looking to retake some of the lost Davion worlds. New Avalon may for instance be on the menu soon if these *Foxes* work out. I don't know where the Lyrans intend to send their *Fredasas*, but if their speed is any indication they would make excellent raiders. The Free Worlds League seems to be working on two different new designs. Government loyalist computer files talk a cruiser named *Agamemnon*, while the Outer Worlds are working on a smaller destroyer codenamed *Impavido*. The Draconis Combine appears to have the most ambitious project. It is large, a true battleship that could fight even the best Star League battlewagons on an even footing. They call it *Dragonlord*, though I've heard the name *Nightlord* in conjunction with it as well. There may be some translation errors in the name due to their unique language structure.

The Periphery has not been a center of new WarShip design and construction for centuries, but I have received reports that suggest that may change. Two projects that appear to have noticeable headway are upgrades to the *Avatar* and *Quixote* WarShips. And I have verified one new construction program. It appears to be focused on building the first new *Chieftain*-class battleships since the Star League Civil War destroyed all of them.

Any of these special projects could portend a radical shift in the balance of power in the future.



OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENT 3

GENETIC ENGINEERING

When the armies of the Free Worlds League conquered the old Magistracy of Canopus they met Centaur chorus lines, Mermaids, and other less credible attractions. Most reports still claim those were elaborate fakes designed to separate visitors from their hard earned money. The Canopian Pleasure Circuses have always followed the policy of never giving up their secrets, but I have personally seen many things that people born on Terra would never believe possible.

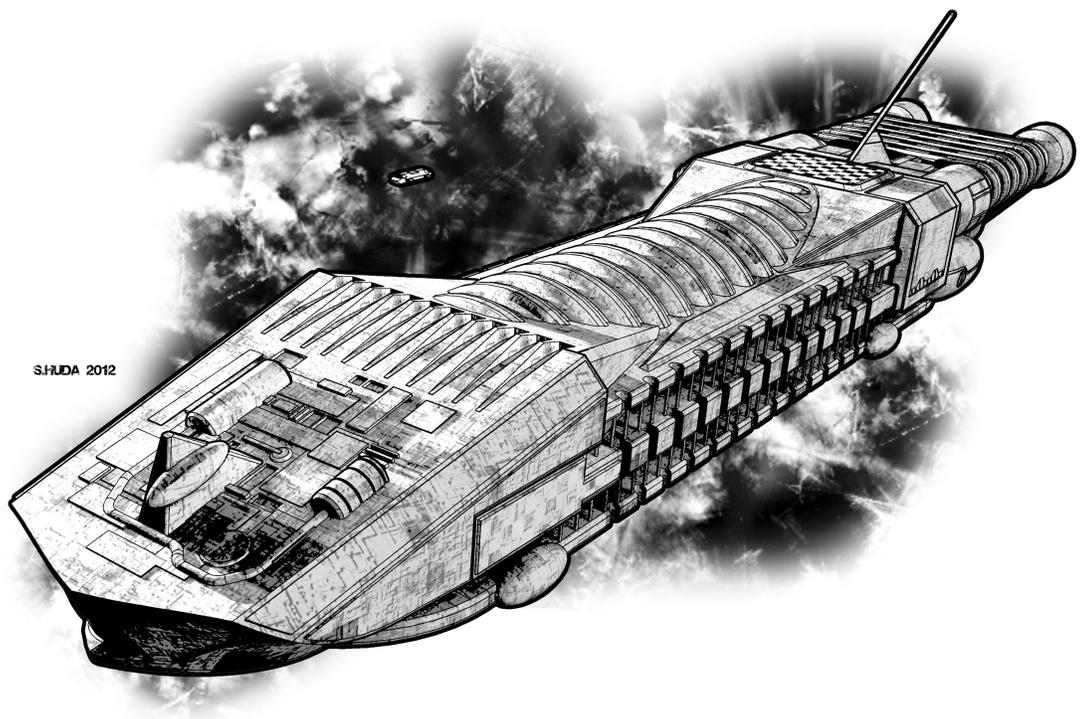
And for those who believe all who live in the Terran system are “normal” I would note that the humanity that first entered space a thousand years ago would say that *we* are the oddities. Did you know that it used to be rare for people to have children after their thirties? Pre-Space Humanity had what they called a “biological clock” when it came to having children. Their reproductive systems degraded over time and it became harder to have children. They mere idea of starting a family in your 70s or 80s would be so far outside their idea of normal as to approach the label of alien. And what of the idea of being healthy and mobile after two hundred years of life? Impossible to their way of thinking. I would also note that I have spent time with those who live in the asteroid belts of Terra and other star systems. I know most of you have never met them, but let me just say that a thousand years of living in zero gravity has done “interesting” things to the human life form out there. In many way the JumpShip Clans and the Belters share more in common with each other

than the rest of humanity. And that is not all due to mere natural selection.

Modern humanity is a result of genetic engineering far beyond what most people think. Improved immune systems that allow us to live on thousands of worlds, a longer life span, and improved health are but a handful of examples of this. The afore mentioned Centaurs, Mermaids, and other creatures of the Periphery are more visible, if less believable to those who have never seen them. But the Periphery is not home merely to inhuman oddities. If my reports are true, Canopian labs have greatly improved the human ability to wage war in the centuries since the Star League fell.

While not usually used in a naval engagement, I would note the average proficiencies that Rim Federation MechWarriors often have. They have improved reaction times and better hand-eye coordination than most other MechWarriors. Then there are the AeroSpace Pilots of the Outworlds Pact. They are smaller than most humans, and can survive low and high gravities far better than normal. And finally we have the Taurian Marines. I have seen Marines standing over two meters tall, with wrists thicker than my thigh, carrying crew-served weapons alone.

And the really crazy thing? I’ve seen reports of Terran Fury Teams made up of people just like this. Is this another example of testing first in the Periphery before seeing widespread use in the Terran military? I only hope we can find out in the future. Rest assured that Starling will never stop looking.



FINIS